

The Relationship Among Family Functioning, Perceived Peer Norms, Future Orientation, and Poor Self-Control in Juvenile Delinquents and Late Adolescent Students

Arunchaya Bunchookittiyot, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand
Sittipong Wattananonsakul, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand
Supat Sanjamsai, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand

The Asian Conference on Education & International Development 2019
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

The objective of this research is to explore the relationship among the family functioning, perceived peer norms, future orientation, and poor self-control. This research tests relations among variables by using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation with 200 juvenile delinquents and 200 late adolescent students (mean age: 17years). Data were collected by measurement scales with reliability ranged from .89-.97. Findings from the Pearson's product moment correlation analysis indicates that family functioning was positively linked with future orientation and perceived peer norms, while family functioning, future orientation, and perceived peer norms were negative linked with poor self-control. The results suggested the same pattern of relationship in both late adolescent students and juvenile delinquents, it is interesting to note that some correlation coefficients are different in separate estimation across the two group. Suggestion and implications for preventive interventions are discussed.

Keywords: Perceived peer norms, Family function, Adolescents, Juvenile, Problem behavior

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

Teenage stage of life is known to be the transitional age characterized by dramatic changes because it is a phase marking the transition from childhood into adulthood (Jessor, 1991). These changes demand significant adjustments due to changes in physical body and hormone causing emotional instability. Studies have shown that juvenile delinquency as well as adolescents committing both minor and prosecutable offenses is rampant at the adolescence age. This is coupled by the fact that teenagers are prone to emotional disturbances and excitement for experimenting as well as rebellion against societal structures and strictures, aping their preferred idol or leader (Wattananonsakul & Tuicomepee, 2014). As a result, they become deviants and behave in the most unacceptable manner. Usually, teenagers like to behave in a gangster manner, often causing disturbances through committing criminal activities making the community and society at large to paranoia and a feeling of insecurity (Jessor, 1993). By nature, their behavior is dynamic and volatile, often going out of control but at times suppressive or over-confidence, with a number of times faring up in what psychologist call "storm and stress" (Coon & Mitterer, 2013). Moreover, the adolescence stage is marked with vulnerabilities and susceptibilities leading to coping of behaviors that are usually harmful or questionable (Wattananonsakul & Tuicomepee, 2014). This study bases its investigation on the principles of problem behavior theory (PBT) such as the concepts of risk and protective factors, which is in line with the model guiding this study. Jessor, Donovan, & Costa (1991) pointed out that the PBT theory focuses on both the individual-level and the social-contextual factors playing out in various contexts such as neighborhoods, school, peer group and the family. In this connection, this study employs the principles of PBT to explore the association that exists among poor self-control, peer norms, future orientation, and family functioning.

Through measurements in social psychological scales, the variables measure risk and protective factors within the personality structure, which are either directly or indirectly linked to juvenile delinquency and normal behaviors. The normal (conventional) behaviors are likely have a strong correlation with protective variables while delinquent behaviors are likely to be decreased by risk factors (Jessor, 1991). From the existing studies examining the factors influencing behavioral offenses in Thailand, it is clear that a larger percentage (69.5%) of juvenile delinquent teens in the juvenile detention center located in Southern Thailand, comes from areas with most maladjusted behaviors like offenders, over-pampering rearing, and neglected upbringing. Miller (1995) mentioned that additional problematic behaviors and violent outbursts are often brought about by lack of mutual understanding. In a number of behavioral problem studies, it has been highlighted that factors such as peer group norm (influencing student behavior), and family functioning significantly affect the behavior of both boys and girls with up to 75% accuracy. This is a view supported by Kaplan and Adock (1988) by arguing that an effective solution to any

quarrel in the family or problematic behavior is determined by perception in family functioning, level of bonding, intra-family communication, and existence of cordial relations.

In this regard, this study seeks to explore the existing relationship among such factors as family functioning, peer norms, future orientation, and poor self-control among student groups in high school and the group of juvenile delinquency.

Method

Participants and survey procedure

The sample size used in this data analysis was 400, which was divided into 2 groups. The late adolescent students were 200 high school students in Ratchaburi province, Thailand collected through purposive sampling from grade 10-12 with the mean of 17 years ($SD = .98$), and The juvenile delinquents were 200 participants who were prosecuted juvenile delinquency in the 7th Region, Thailand collected through purposive sampling with the mean of 17 years ($SD = 1.10$). Means, Standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient were computed for answering the research questions. The questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes to complete and the survey protocol was approved by the Ethical Review Committee for Research Involving Human Research Subjects No. SWUEC /X-169/2561. The data collection was administered under confidential condition.

Measures

The survey questionnaire included scale items to measure the protective and risk factors described above. Scale included in the questionnaire are:

Family functioning: This scale was measured by 23 items based on the McMaster Family Assessment Device (Wattananonsakul, Suttiwan & Iamsupasit, 2010). The scale assessed the whole family functioning with 6 domains including affective involvement, communication, affective response, problem solving, role, and behavioral control. The answer had a 4-point response scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). A 24 - item scale for family functioning had $\alpha = .87$. The item scores were summed and a higher score meant a healthier family functioning.

Future orientation: The scale contains 12 items assessing future perspective based on Nurmi (1991 cited in Wattananonsakul & Tuicomepee, 2014). Each of the 12 items had a 4-point response scale ranging from 1 (very untrue of me) to 4 (very true of me). The reliability of the future orientation scale is .892. Summed score was interpreted for explaining higher score meant a higher future orientation.

Peer norms: The scale based on the theory of reason action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The measures the ability of teen students and juvenile delinquency group perceived peer influence or peer pressure. The scale consists of two constructs: motivation to

comply and normative belief. This 8-item scale for perceived peer norms had a reliability of $\alpha = .89$

Self-control: From the study of self-control (Wattananonsakul & Tuicomepee, 2014). The indicators of poor self-control were impatience, distractibility, and impulsiveness. The 12-item scale for poor self-control had reliability of $\alpha = .97$. Each item had a 4-point response ranging from 1 (very untrue of me) to 4 (very true of me). The summed score was used from 12 items so that a higher score of poor self-control means higher poor self-control. Wattananonsakul, Suttiwan, & Iamsupasit, 2010)

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics and correlations were computed for the demographic variables and variables in the framework model. Pearson's product moment correlation was used to test the relationship among variables: future orientation, family functioning, perceived peer norm, and poor self-control.

Results

The results show various significant relationship among variables as follows:

Late adolescent students: The late adolescent students are seen to have family functioning positively related to peer norms ($r=.677, p<.01$) and future orientation ($r=.619, p<.01$) but has negatively related to poor self-control ($r=-.770, p<.01$). The results showed that all variables were statistically significant.

Juvenile delinquency group: Poor self-control has a negative correlated to family functioning ($r= -.847, p<.01$), peer norms ($r= -.528, p<.01$), and future orientation ($r= -.653, p<.01$). The results showed that all variables were statistically significant. Correlation, means, and standard deviations of variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Intercorrelations, means, and standard deviations for all study variables among late adolescent students and juvenile delinquency group.

Variables	1	2	3	4	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Family functioning	-	.677**	.619**	-.770**	65.41	7.34
2. Perceived peer norms	.657**	-	.477**	-.674**	32.86	4.0
3. Future orientation	.738**	.729**	-	-.755**	21.13	3.0
4. Poor self-control	-.847**	-.528**	-.653**	-	19.88	7.0
<i>M</i>	31.47	18.40	14.49	50.35		
<i>SD</i>	16.42	9.65	5.12	15.51		

** $p<.01$: correlations above diagonal are of late adolescent students. (n=200), below are of juvenile delinquency group. (n=200)

Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the relationship between variables such as family functioning, perceived peer norms, future orientation, and poor self-control among late adolescent student group and juvenile delinquency group. The data analyzed is developed from a sample of 400 people. Below is a summary of the results. The sample size used in this data analysis was 400, which was divided into 2 groups, the 200 late adolescent students, and the 200 juvenile delinquents. In this sample, the average age is 17 years. The three factor variables used in this study are future orientation, perceived peer norms, and family function positively linked to problematic behavior, having a correlation coefficients range between .47 to .84, with a statistical significance of .01, while poor self-control showing a negative relationship with other variables, and a statistical significance of .01. Wills and Filer (1996, cited in Wattananonsakul & Tuicomepee, 2014) proposed that self-control is seen as important for the deviant behavior since adolescents with high poor self-control experience high levels of emotional distress and hence tend to avoid facing problems rather than trying to cope with them. These characteristics contribute to the tendency to misbehave. However, adolescents with good self-control are able to control emotional state, use coping strategies to deal with their problems and have a planning approach, including conventional behavior (Wills, Sandy & Yeager, 2000 cited in Wattananonsakul & Tuicomepee, 2014)

Future orientation had positive relationship with family functioning and peer norm in both late adolescent group and juvenile delinquency group but had negative correlated with poor self-control that mean increasing the future orientation, perceived of family functioning and peer norm will decrease the likelihood of poor self-control in both sample groups. This finding supported by the Problem Behavior Theory (Jessor, 1993) The result also showed that perceived of peer norms is also important in adolescence period. There are similarity results found in this research. The peer norms correlated positively with family functioning and future orientation but had negative correlation with poor self-control. It can be explained that perceive peer norm is common phenomenon found in adolescence period and consistent with previous model of problem behavior.

Recommendation

1. The problems that caused problematic behaviors in adolescents and late adolescents making them commit crimes are poor self-control, future orientation, perceived peer norms and, family functioning. Therefore, people such as teachers who work with adolescents must be experienced and knowledgeable on these variables so that they can guide the adolescents effectively as well as offer information on training, promoting family institutions in order for adolescents to understand their roles, control themselves, and avoid getting influence by problematic behaviors and criminal activities.

2. The findings of this study should be implemented within the family and society levels to help institutionalize good behaviors and guide adolescents to adopt appropriate behavioral behaviors.
3. The follow-up studies should emphasize selected factors in order to deal with problem behaviors at the adolescence stage so that appropriate behavior can be promoted.
4. It is important to understand the factors influencing adolescent behavior so that parents and teachers can promote the appropriate behaviors.

It is important to note that the generalizability of findings of this study may be limited and cannot be used outside this area. Moreover, discretion is necessary when interpreting and using these results. In the future studies, it is critical to include model testing and development of programs deduced from this study in order to increase the efficacy of preventing future problematic behaviors. There is also need to emphasize the factors that influence adolescent's behaviors such as future orientation, development of cognition process, resistance to peer pressure, family functioning, and poor self-control.

Acknowledgement

This research was supported by grants GRAD S-3-62 from the Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University.

References

Coon, D., & Mitterer, J. O. (2013). *Gateways to psychology: An introduction to mind and behavior* (13th ed.). Wadsworth: Cengage learning.

Fishbein, M. & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley.

Jessor, R. (1991). Risk behavior in adolescence: A psychosocial frame-work for understanding and action. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 12, 597-605.

Jessor, R. (1993). Successful adolescent development among youth in high-risk settings. *American Psychologist*, 48, 117-126.

Jessor, R., Donovan, J. E. & Costa, F. (1991). *Beyond adolescence: Problem behavior and young adult development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kaplan, H. I., & Sadock, B. J. (1998). *Kaplan and Sadock synopsis of psychiatric* (8th Edition). Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins

Kittidet Kiatmahachai, (2012). Psychosocial Correlates of Self Control Ability of Male Juvenile Delinquents. (Master's thesis, Social Development National Institute of Development Administration).

Miller, A.P., (1995). How to look good and influence people: Thoughts on the design and interpretation of an archaeological GIS. In Lock, G & Stancic, Z. (eds.), *Archaeology and geographical information systems: A european perspective*, Taylor & Francis, London: 319-333.

Wattananonsakul, S., Tuicomepee, A. (2014). Protective predictors of smoking intention among lower secondary school students in Bangkok, Thailand. *Journal of Population and Social Studies*, 22(2), July 2014. Doi 10.14456/jpss.2014.11

Wattananonsakul, S., Suttiwan, P., & Iamsupasit, S. (2010). Pathways to smoking and drinking: The role of family functioning, supportive parenting, self-control, risk and protective factors in Thai adolescents. *Journal of Health Research*, 24(3), 135-142.

Wongwiwat, S. (2005). Selected factors related to sexual relationships of mathayomsuksa three students in Bangkok. Master's thesis, (Faculty of Psychology) Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University.

Contact email: tn_3443@hotmail.com